

## ROCK-A-BY.

J. S. SLATER.

"Rock-a-by, baby! come, shut your eyes;  
Twilight has driven each bird to its nest.  
Rock-a-by, baby, and hush your cries;  
Softly the shadows are wooing to rest.  
Rock-a-by, baby, rock-a-by, dear,  
Mother is watching to drive away fear;  
Rock-a-by, baby, and go to sleep,  
Mother is waiting love's vigil to keep.

"Rock-a-by, baby," the mother sings,  
Holding her babe in her warm, loving arms,—  
"Rock-a-by, dear!"—while the twilight flings  
Its shadows of gray o'er her infant's charms.  
"Rock-a-by, baby, rock-a-by, sweet,  
Slumber, my darling, till morn comes to greet;  
Rock-a-by, rock-a-by, hush, my dear,  
Mother is watching you, mother is near."

Morning has come; but the mother's breast  
Fills with the sweet baby-burthen no more.  
During the darkness the Angel of Rest  
Whispered the sleeper, and living was o'er.  
Sadly the mourner, heart sore bereft,  
Gathers mementoes death's monarch has left:—  
Treasures of trinkets—a dainty dress—  
One sunny ringlet of hair, to caress!

FOR THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

## IN FRONT OF YORKTOWN.

A REMINISCENCE.

The Army of the Potomac reached the immediate vicinity of Yorktown April 5, 1862.

Porter's Division of Heintzelman's (the Third) Corps held the advance upon the right, nearest the York River; Smith's Division of the Fourth (Keyes's) Corps upon the left. At that time but little was known regarding the exact location and strength of the rebel works. Enough had been ascertained, however, to satisfy the Commanding General of the Union forces that the Confederate position was a strong one. Reliable information had been obtained showing that a chain of fortifications extended across the Peninsula—at that point between eight and ten miles wide—in front of and parallel to which for more than two-thirds of the distance ran the Warwick River. This stream found its source not far from the ancient town made memorable by the surrender of Cornwallis in Revolutionary days, and, after a tortuous southerly course of perhaps six miles through a low, swampy, and, especially upon the left, heavily-timbered country, turned abruptly in an easterly direction and emptied into the James some four miles below the elbow thus formed. For nearly half its length it opposed an impassable barrier to the passage of troops. It was navigable, for vessels of moderate draught only, as far as Southall's Landing, between two and three miles north and up the stream from the angle mentioned, at which point the enemy had erected

HEAVY BATTERIES,

and to prevent their position from being turned a line of earthworks facing south had also been constructed which extended westward up and parallel to the James to Skiff Creek, a distance of perhaps one and one-half miles.

From Southall's Landing northward there was a continuous chain of redoubts within easy supporting distance of each other, many of them connected by lines of earthworks and rifle-pits; and at Lee's Mills, where the road from Newport News to Williamsburg crossed the Warwick, and between Lee's and Wynn's Mills, about three miles further North, the defensive character of the works was strengthened by an inner line overlooking and commanding the outer approaches.

As already stated, the line of the Union advance up the James River side of the Peninsula lay through a swampy country, overgrown with heavy timber, and the only available road was that crossing the Warwick at Lee's Mill, which was protected not only by the fortifications fronting southeasterly, or down the Peninsula, but also by other works forming a part of the system extending up the Peninsula and which broke off from the main line in that immediate vicinity at nearly a right angle. But if the obstacles presented upon the left were seemingly insurmountable, those upon the right were scarcely less so. It is true that the country as it approached the York River became more open, but it was interlaced by a perfect network of deep ravines, creeks, and other natural obstructions, interspersed with swamps and stretches of heavy timber, ill adapted to either the movement of troops or the use of artillery. More formidable still,

THE KEY TO THE POSITION,

Yorktown, was strongly entrenched, every appliance of modern engineering skill having been brought into requisition to render it impregnable. Guns of heavy calibre looked over the parapets of the works, commanding not only the York River, but the country in front and nearly as far to the southward as Wynn's Mill, near which were several redoubts, also heavily armed. Across from Yorktown, on the opposite side of the York River, at a place quite narrow, were the rebel batteries located at Gloucester Point, and until these were silenced the gunboats could not ascend the stream so as to threaten the enemy's line of communication or cut off retreat altogether.

Porter and Smith came in contact with the enemy at about the same time on the afternoon of the 5th, the former in front of the main defenses at Yorktown, the latter in front of the fortified position at Lee's Mills.

General Smith, in advancing, found his troops exposed to a sharp artillery fire from the rebel batteries upon his left, and after getting in position, and sending out reconnaissances, found the guns annoying him were upon the opposite bank of the Warwick, which rendered them unapproachable and therefore incapable of being carried by assault.

From Howard's bridge over the Pequenos River, not quite half way between Big Bethel and Yorktown, to the latter place, Porter's line of march for most of the distance lay through heavy timber, and terminated in a broad and comparatively open space within view of

THE MAIN REBEL DEFENSES

enveloping Yorktown, and in easy range of their guns.

The timber fringing this open space had been slashed, the roads blockaded, and every convenient obstacle interposed to the advancing column. During the 4th, and until about noon of the 5th, it had rained almost incessantly, and the roads, never good at the best, had been turned into

rivers of mud, along which infantry could barely travel, and artillery scarcely move at all. Besides, the weather was exceedingly hot and sultry, thus adding to the general discomfort and increasing the other difficulties which of themselves were not easy to be overcome. For the last mile or two it seemed scarcely possible for any headway to be made. The troops were greatly fatigued, burdened with knapsacks, overcoats, and the like, and, owing to the noxious exhalations from the swamps, the intense heat and want of air, which the dense forests seemed to completely shut out, appeared to be upon the point of giving out entirely. As the vanguard appeared in the edge of the slashings, the enemy's cannon opened, and the booming of the guns told that there was work ahead.

Just at this juncture an officer of one of the leading regiments, the Thirtieth N. Y. Vols., struck up "John Brown's Body," a tune then known only to a few, but afterwards famous as the marching song of the Army of the Potomac. Others, catching the rhythm, joined in with him. The music operated like a charm. The wearied forms grew erect, the marching men took up the strain, and beneath the bursting shells and to the accompaniment of the deep double bass of cannon, the ranks, cadencing their steps to the inspiring melody, debouched upon the plain, deployed, and were arrayed face to face with the foe. It is believed that upon that occasion

"JOHN BROWN'S BODY"

was first sung in chorus by any considerable number of soldiers, and that never before had it been sung under similar circumstances, or for like purposes. It became the marching song of the Army almost from that day.

So fast as the regiments could advance from the timber, they were assigned proper positions in line. In front of the Second Maine and Thirtieth New York, growing upon a slight elevation, stood a large wild-cherry tree, which was speedily utilized by a dozen of the men as a look-out station.

From its branches the rebel works were plainly visible. While the boys were seated upon convenient limbs, taking observations, a large shell whistled through the foliage above their heads, and no orchard of over-ripe fruit ever witnessed a windfall like that which ensued.

Down tumbled the Blue Coats, some dropping from branch to branch like wounded squirrels, others sliding down the trunk, but in rather a precipitous manner, and in the twinkling of an eye there was any amount of room from the top downwards, but which no one in that vicinity seemed disposed to occupy. Fortunately, save a few bruises from falling, all who had previously ventured escaped injury.

Meanwhile, upon the left of Porter's line, in the direction of Wynn's Mills, a sharp artillery contest was progressing between the rebel batteries and some of the Union field-guns stationed near the angle of a wood, along the further edge of which ran a narrow road nearly parallel to the course of the Warwick, and but a few hundred yards from the rebel works.

It being deemed essential to know the exact lay of the country beyond, as well as to ascertain the exact location of the enemy's line of defenses at that point, a detail was made from several regiments, to act more in the capacity of scouts than skirmishers. Two of these met with quite a

SERIES OF ADVENTURES

before returning, between two and three o'clock the next morning, to their command. They started out about four o'clock in the afternoon, entering the timber nearly opposite Wynn's Mill, if anything a little to the left of it. Before progressing far they found themselves involved in a genuine Virginia swamp, the water and mud of which reached at times up to their knees, even when the most favorable pathway was selected. It was only through the utmost exertion that they succeeded, a little before sundown, in reaching the roadway already mentioned, although the distance traveled was probably not over a mile. A brief investigation, which was then instituted, developed the fact that not fifty yards to their right was a narrow tongue of land, averaging not more than a dozen feet in width, which apparently led through the swamp almost parallel to the route pursued by them. Making a mental note of this, they crawled across the thoroughfare, through an intervening fence, into a ditch, and in a few minutes had succeeded, under cover of the weeds and bushes, in getting so near to the enemy's fortifications that they were enabled not only to see them distinctly but also to hear the commands of the officers, and even loud conversation carried on by the foe on the opposite side of the Warwick, which at that point was but a narrow stream, a mere creek.

It was nearly dusk when they started to retrace their steps; but upon arriving near the road they found it occupied by the rebels who, judging from appearances, were about pickinget for the night. They had evidently crossed above, and the presumption was that no chance of retreat existed for the two

VENTURESOME SCOUTS

except through the line to be or which had already been established. They had eaten nothing since morning, had left their haversacks with the regiment, and at least the lower portion of their persons was thoroughly saturated with the slimy water of the swamps. It was rapidly getting dark, a storm was threatening, the excessive heat of the day had already given place to a chilly spring atmosphere, and they did not fancy the situation in which they found themselves—not a particle. At length one of them, Tom C—, a son of the Green Isle, suggested that they attempt to "skin through." There was little room for debate, and so, when darkness had fairly settled down, they began cautiously crawling in the direction of the narrow isthmus observed by them some hours earlier. By great good fortune they succeeded in reaching it, and had just begun to congratulate themselves that all danger was past, when "Halt! who comes there?" rang out the challenge of a sentinel scarcely twenty feet in front of where they stood. "Oh, Lord!" whispered Tom, "it's gobbled we are entirely," saying which, without attempting to answer the challenge, he slid off to the right and the next moment went ker-splash! into the swamp. His companion, following close behind, met a similar fate.

Again the sentinel's cry rang out, but Tom and

his co-sufferer remained silent. They could not well do otherwise, for having taken a header as they went down it took a few moments to clear away the slime and water they had involuntarily shipped.

When all had grown still they began wading cautiously along, the water oftentimes rising to their waists, and continued until they had, as they supposed, passed the point where the picket was stationed. "I'll be d—d if I am going to

PLAY MUD TURTLE

any longer," whispered Tom's companion. "I'm yer mon for dry land and a wet stomach," responded Tom, and both, in the darkness, began groping for the pathway which had been so recently abandoned. They had barely succeeded in reaching it when the rain commenced to fall in torrents, accompanied by blinding flashes of lightning and heavy peals of thunder.

Before they had progressed a dozen yards another sentry challenged them, and, without waiting for a reply, fired his musket. "Howly Moses, but the woods is full ov the craychurs," groaned Tom, as they both took water for the second time; not, however, before a flash of lightning had revealed to them the figure of the man who had thus unceremoniously treated them. The shot had the effect of stirring up the other pickets within sound, and for a few minutes it appeared as if the whole Confederate Army was bivouacked in and about the swamp. Presently an officer came down, called out to the over-hasty son of Mars, approached him, and after ascertaining what little he had to relate, administered a good cursing and departed toward the roadway.

Once more, save for the falling rain and rolling thunder, quiet brooded over all, and Tom started toward camp, closely followed by his comrade, this time, however, keeping to the swamp as the safest course. Stumbling over logs, falling over branches of trees, slipping, sliding, and doing some tall talking in a low voice by the way, they traveled two hours or more, at the end of which time they again reached terra firma. But trouble was not yet over. As Tom stepped up out of the swamp his foot slipped and back he fell with a tremendous splash.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

went three rifles in succession, while a harsh voice roared out, a few seconds after, "Who the h—ll comes there?"

Of course, nobody answered an inquiry couched in such language. It was some minutes before any further movement was made, but at length, after getting their breath, the two once more entered the swamp, resolved to go through before daylight, or turn frogs entirely. They were unable to determine whether the last challenge had been delivered by friend or foe, and therefore resolved to keep straight ahead, believing that by so doing they could not well go amiss.

Presently they heard the approach of a squad of men in their front. Crouching down so that they might not be revealed by the lightning, they listened, and to their great joy discovered that the new comers were friends, not enemies. Making themselves known, they were furnished the countersign, piloted to the inner line of Union pickets, and from thence ordered to report to headquarters. It was noon before they rejoined their regiment, and several days before, aided by "commissary," they succeeded in getting the taste of the villainous swamps out of their mouths.

## GEMS OF THOUGHT.

[From the Koran.]

A libation is better than a potation; wine is often better spilt than drank.

A lie is a desperate cowardice; it is to fear man and brave God.

Lovers are apt to hear through their eyes; but the safest way is to see through their ears.

All young animals are merry, and all old ones grave. An old woman is the only ancient animal that ever is frisky.

It is better to do the idlest thing in the world than to sit idle for half an hour.

Drink never changes, but only shows our natures.

In the whole Hebrew dictionary there is no word to express nature and philosophy.

What a dread of death must some people have who would rather be dying than dead.

Man must be initiated in the mysteries of iniquity in order the more safely to pursue the paths of virtue.

Better to have one's feet dirty than his hands.

The more a person wants the less will do him good.

A kindness can never be canceled, not even by repaying it.

Algebra is the metaphysics of arithmetic.

Desire is in youth a passion—in age vice.

To have respect for ourselves guides our morals; to have a deference for others governs our manners.

An epicure desires but one dish; the glutton would have two.

The four characteristics of mankind: To build a house, to raise a tree, to write a book, and to have a child.

When a misfortune is impending I cry, "God forbid!" but when it falls upon me I say, "God be praised!"

A man's fortune should be the rule for his sparing, not spending. Extravagance may be supported, not justified, by affluence.

A sober man when drunk has the same kind of stupidity about him that a drunken man has when sober.

## FIGHTING FOR POSTERITY.

During the late war General Jubal A. Early, commanding the First Army Corps, A. N. V., (C. S. A.) while in the valley of Virginia, one day heard an old "vet" growling at a fearful rate about the hardships he had to encounter, short rations, &c., and took occasion to pitch into him for his want of manliness, and in the course of his remarks said: "Remember you are not fighting for yourself but for posterity."

"Is that so?" demanded the soldier in tones of astonishment.

"Of course it is," said old Jube.

"Well, by thunder, if I had known that I would never have enlisted. Posterity never did anything for me, and she can fight her own battles."

"Old Jube was floored."

## A PATHETIC INCIDENT.

Some days since a disseminator of *Chaff* noticed a ragged little bootblack culling some bright blossoms from a bruised and faded bouquet which a chambermaid had thrown from a window into the alley.

"What are you doing with that bouquet, my lad?" asked the disseminator.

"Nawthin," was the lad's reply, as he kept on at his work.

"But do you love flowers so well that you are willing to pick them out of the mud?"

"I s'pose that's my business an' none o' your'n."

"Oh! certainly, but you surely cannot expect to sell those faded flowers."

"Sell 'em! who wants to sell 'em! I'm goin' to take 'em to Lil."

"Oh, oh!" Lil is your sweetheart. I see.

"No, Lil is not my sweetheart—she's my sick sister," said the boy, as his eyes flashed and his dirty chin quivered. "Lil's been sick a long time—an' lately she talked of nothin' but flowers an' birds, but mother told me this mornin' that Lil would die b-b-before the birds an' flowers came back."

The boy burst into tears.

"Come with me to the florist's, and your sister shall have a nice bouquet."

The little fellow was soon bounding home with his treasure. Next day he appeared and said:

"I came to thank you, sir, for Lil. That bouquet done her so much good, and she hugged and hugged it till she set herself a coughin' again. She says she'll come bime-bye and work for you, soon's she gets well."

An order was sent to the florist to give the boy every other day a bouquet for Lil.

It was only the day before yesterday that the bootblack appeared again. He stepped inside the office door and said:

"Thank you, sir, but Lil—Lil" (tears were streaming from his eyes) "won't—need—the flowers any more."

He went quickly away, but his brief words had told the story. Lil won't need the flowers any more, but they will grow above her and the birds will sing around her just the same.—*Exchange*.

## WHAT IT COSTS TO KILL A MAN IN WAR.

We have some curious statistics from a French author writing on contemporary wars, as to what it costs to kill a man. He takes the whole expenditure of money for each war and divides that by the number of men killed on the field, or whose death was owing directly to the war. In the Crimean war, where many were congregated in close quarters, he estimates that 750,000 were killed at the cost of \$2,165 per man. Putting the deaths in our late war at 284,000, which is rather a low estimate, each death was purchased at a cost of \$16,725. In the late Mexican and South American wars the expense for killing a man was \$4,500. In the Danish war, 3,500 lives were lost at an average of \$10,000. In the Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866, which ended at Sadowa, \$7,500 was the price per death. It will thus be seen that it cost this Government more to extinguish one life than any of the other countries mentioned, and that the cost of killing in any of them, would maintain several in times of peace.

## APPLIED THEOLOGY.

AN ESTEEMED contemporary, which has not had much luck with poetry, has dropped into prose in a friendly way, and narrates how, at a meeting of Woburn conference, Farmer Allen related an anecdote, to the following effect:

"On Sunday morning, while a certain deacon was preparing for church, a wandering wayfarer, or, in modern parlance, a tramp, appeared at his door, pleaded his hunger, and begged for something to eat. The deacon looked solemn and frowningly, but reluctantly got a loaf of bread and began to cut it; but, while doing so, took occasion to admonish the beggar concerning the error of his ways. After reminding him that it was the holy Sabbath which he was desecrating, he asked him if he knew how to pray. 'No,' was the reply. 'Then,' said the deacon, 'I'll learn you,' and he commenced to repeat the Lord's prayer.

"But just as he uttered the first words, 'Our Father,' the beggar interrupted him with the question, 'What! is he your father and mine too?'

"'Yes,' the deacon replied.

"'Why,' exclaimed the beggar, 'we are brothers, then, ain't we? Can't you cut that slice a little thicker?'

An interesting piece of "applied theology," indeed, and the story has always been justly admired since it was first told, "a-many years ago," of an English bishop.

Two darkies went out to hunt opossums, and by accident found a large cave with quite a small entrance. Peeping in they discovered three young (bear) whelps in the interior.

"Look heah, Sam, ize gwine to go in dar and get the young bears—you jest watch dis yer hole for de old bear." Sam got asleep in the sun. When opening his eyes he saw the old bear scouring her way into the cave.

Quick as wink he caught her by the tail, and held on to her like grim death.

"Hello, dar Sam, what for you dark de hole dar?"

"Lord bless you, honey, save your self; if dis yer tail comes out, you'll find out what dark de hole!"

On a tombstone at Florence is this inscription: "Here lies Salvino Armati d'Armati, of Florence, the inventor of spectacles. May God pardon his sins! The year 1318."

A rich farmer refused to subscribe for an iron fence for a cemetery in Vermont, on the plea that it needed no fence, as those inside cannot get out, and those who are out do not want to get in.

A sick man was told that nothing would cure him but a quart of catnip tea. "Then I must die," said he, "for I don't hold but a pint."

Man wanders on the outer edge  
Of life for twenty years or more,  
Then seeks to climb the rugged ledge  
And toils and strives through years a score;  
And if, perchance, the height be won,  
He lingers there a few short years,  
Until, descending like the sun,  
He passes down the vale of tears,  
To rest at last within the kindly breast  
Of his first mother—Earth—who loved him best.

## THE TABLES TURNED.

From the Virginia (Nev.) Chronicle.

A communistic person identified with the dangerous classes of the Comstock and notorious for his disregard of truth and contempt for vested rights, has just returned from a visit to San Francisco. This morning he endangered the good name of the *Chronicle* by entering its editorial rooms. The nihilist declared that he had "a good thing on Stanford and Steve Gage," but he supposed the *Chronicle*, like the rest of the corrupt and time-serving press, would be afraid to publish it.

"Tell your story," said the editor with dignity, gazing inquiringly at the boot of the socialist, which was resting upon the editorial table. The boot remained there, however, while the following ridiculous narrative was delivered:

"It's fine weather at the bay, and everybody who can afford it takes a spin occasionally out of the dust and heat. Last Saturday Stanford and Gage were walking along Kearney street, and when they got to the corner of Bush the Governor took off his hat, wiped his brow, and remarked:

"Steve, it's too hot for anything. What do you say to a breath of fresh air?"

"Have we time?" inquired Mr. Gage, pulling out his watch. So did the Governor, who replied: "There isn't anything very pressing for a couple of hours, I guess, and we may as well take a spin out to the park. It isn't worth while to have out my horses. Let's take a hack, and then we can enjoy a walk when we get there. It'll be better than riding around the drives."

So they got into a coupe and were driven out to Golden Gate Park. At the entrance the Governor and Gage alighted.

"What's the fare?" asked the Governor.

The driver, a retired prize-fighter, replied:

"On'y \$15, Guv'nur."

"What!" yelled Stanford and Gage in the same breath.

"Fifteen dollars," repeated cabby, unbuttoning his coat and spitting on his hands.

"But, my good man," protested the Governor, "such a charge is exorbitant. The law confines you to a certain price for your services, and you can be arrested and punished for such a violation of the ordinance."

"Hang the law!" growled cabby. "My money bought and paid for this hack an' hosses, an' the essence of ownership is control."

"Hem!" coughed the Governor, looking slyly at Steve, who began to grin. "That's all well enough when applied to my railroads, but—but—er—now, if you charge us \$15 to bring us up to the park, what on earth would you charge to take take us up to the Cliff House?"

"Five dollars."

"From here?"

"No; from the city."

"But it's twice the distance!"

"Yes, but it's a competitive point; \$15 to the park, \$5 to the Cliff. No hoggin' about it. Through rate to the Cliff, local rate back to park added—just as you fellows do when you charge \$300 for drawing a carload of stuff from New York to 'Frisco, and make it \$800 if you drop the car at Elko, about 500 miles nearer New York."

It was Steve's turn to cough and the Governor's to grin.

"Well," said the Governor with a sigh, "take us to the Cliff."

At the Cliff House the Governor and Stephen drank their beer and smoked a cigar, and listened to the barking of the seals, and filled their lungs with sea-breeze. Suddenly Steve clapped himself on the leg and cried out:

"By Jove, Governor! I forgot that lot of coal of Smith's that the sheriff is to sell at 3 o'clock. It's 2 now. If we miss that a chance to save at least \$1,000 will be gone."

"Good heavens!" cried the Governor snatching out his watch, "let's hurry back at once. Driver! Oh, driver!"

"Here, sir," answered cabby, who had been leaning over the balcony parapet within earshot, "here, sir."

"We want to return to town immediately," cried Mr. Gage.

"Ya-as, I s'pose so," said cabby, slowly chewing a straw, "but I'll take may pay in advance, if it's all the same to you, gents."

The Governor growled something between his teeth and tendered \$5.

"Taint enough," said cabby contemptuously.

"In heaven's name, how far will your extortion go?" snorted the Governor. "How much do you want?"

"Five hundred more," calmly replied the hackman.

"Hey?" shrieked Steve and the Governor.

"Five hundred, an' not a cent less," repeated cabby.

"How, sir—er—damme, sir! how do you dare ask such a price for driving two gentlemen four or five miles?" sputtered the Governor.

"I bases my charge on what the traffic will bear," replied the hackman with a grin. "If taters is sellin' in Los Angeles for 50 cents a bushel, and at \$3 a bushel at Tucson, you fellows charge the poor devil of a rancher \$2.50 a bushel to pack his taters to Tucson, and gobble all the profit. Now, I ain't as hoggish as that. I heered Mr. Gage say if he could get into town by 3 o'clock he could make \$1,000. As there ain't no other hack here, I'm as good a monopoly for this wunst as any blasted railroad on earth; but ain't so greedy. I don't want all you can make by usin' my hack. I'm willin' to get along with half."

With a dismal groan the Governor and Steve emptied their pockets and counted out the money.

"Now see here," said cabby, as he closed the door of the hack on his victims, "I've done for wunst what you roosters do day in and day out an' have been doin' for years, an' made yer millions by it. I happen to be able to give you a dose of yer own medicine for wunst, an' I don't want you to do no kickin'. I know you kin send me to jail for runnin' my business on your principles, but if yer jails me I'll have your blood when I get out, an' don't yer forget it."

Thereupon the hackman clapped the door to with a bang, and climbing to his seat, drove at a rattling pace to the place where the sheriff was about to sell out poor Smith. Smith was a coal dealer who didn't have special rates.

When the nihilist had finished this absurd and libelous tale he took his foot off the editorial desk, laughed hoarsely and departed for the nearest saloon.